



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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ISSUE 1947 ALASKA COMMERCIAL FISHING REGULATIONS

Changes in the regulations for the protection of the commercial fisheries of Alaska during 1947 were issued today by Secretary of the Interior J. A. Krug.

These new regulations, recommended by the Fish and Wildlife Service, are based upon investigations of fishery biologists, fishery management agents, and testimony presented at public hearings conducted by the Service at eight places in Alaska and in Seattle, Washington.

Fishermen and operators in southeastern Alaska have been concerned for some time over the growing lateness of the pink salmon runs. Because the consensus of the testimony at the hearings was that this problem could be corrected only by allowing a larger proportion of the early-arriving fish to escape to reproduce themselves, the 1947 opening dates for commercial fishing in all districts of southeastern Alaska, except the Stikine district, will be two weeks to a month later than in 1946. Offsetting this to some extent will be a reduction in the weekly closed period from 60 to 36 hours. Provision is made also for extension of the fishing season in definite open periods alternating with closed periods, provided the runs are late and of sufficient volume to warrant fishing beyond the normal closing date. This method of handling possible extensions has been made applicable in the Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak, and Prince William Sound areas also.

Other changes in southeastern Alaska include several adjustments in district boundaries. All of Lisianski Inlet and Yakobi Island now are in the Western

district whereas formerly they were divided between the Icy Strait and Western districts. All waters south and east of the southern extremity of Kosciusko Island, including Davidson Inlet, Sea Otter Sound, and Heceta Island, have been transferred from the Sumner Strait district to the South Prince of Wales Island district, and the North Arm of Behm Canal has been transferred from the Southern district to the North Clarence Strait district.

Fall fishing throughout southeastern Alaska is restricted to the period from October 15 to November 15--two weeks shorter than in 1946.

Only one new closed area has been created in southeastern Alaska; this is Hole in the Wall on the north coast of Prince of Wales Island.

Trolling from Lituya Bay to Cape Spencer is prohibited prior to July 15 to protect small, undersize king salmon that school there at that time of year.

In the Yakutat district minor changes have been made in Ahnrklin and Situk Inlet gear restrictions to make them uniform.

Changes in southeastern Alaska affecting fisheries other than salmon include (1) closed seasons on herring fishing, except for bait and by gill nets, from May 1 to June 10 and October 16 to November 1; (2) a uniform closed season on butter clams throughout the area from April 15 to September 15; and (3) closed season on shrimp fishing from February 1 to September 30 and closure of Duncan Canal to all shrimp fishing.

Elsewhere than southeastern Alaska there has been a minor change in the description of the area closed to salmon fishing in the Bering River-Icy Bay area; a reduction in the limit on razor clams to be taken in the Prince William Sound-Copper River areas from 46,000 to 40,000 cases; an elimination of the limitation on take of razor clams from certain central bars; the extension of the Prince William Sound area quota waters for herring fishing to include also the waters of the Resurrection Bay area; an increase in minimum depth of purse seines in Prince William Sound to $9\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms and permitting of the use of leads 75 fathoms long, and the opening of the season in Prince William Sound 5 days later than in 1946.

In the Cook Inlet area the opening date for king salmon fishing will be 5 days earlier than in 1946, and all salmon fishing will terminate 4 days earlier to give greater protection to expected small runs of pink salmon. Based on new surveys, the open areas for 4 traps have been redescribed. This will not permit any change in the actual location of these traps. Three new regulations have been added to protect Dungeness crabs in these waters. These new restrictions are identical with those in effect in nearby Prince William Sound.

In the Kodiak area, although relatively small runs of salmon are expected between Cape Trinity and Narrow Point and in the vicinity of Afognak Island, no additional restrictions have been imposed by these regulations. However, if these expectations are confirmed during the season, appropriate curtailment will be made in the field. Otherwise in the Kodiak area, the regulation limiting gill nets to a maximum mesh of $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches has been deleted pending completion of studies in progress, and restrictions applicable to purse seines off the Karluk Reservation have been modified to correspond with those in effect during the 1946 fishing season.

The Alaska Peninsula area has been divided into 5 districts for administrative purposes; maximum and minimum depths of 175 and 120 meshes, respectively, are prescribed for beach seines; and a catch limitation of 700,000 red salmon is authorized in the Port Moller district.

A good run of red salmon is expected in all districts of Bristol Bay this year and regulations have been relaxed somewhat to allow the maximum economic use of the resource consistent with its conservation. The season in all districts except Ugashik will be from June 23 to July 23 while in the Ugashik it will be June 30 to July 30. The weekly closed period has been reduced from 72 to 60 hours, and the requirement of a maximum mesh of $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches has been deleted.

A new regulation, announced at all hearings, requires that each permit holder install and operate the trap at the site for which he has a permit, or if installed and operated by another, that he bear a substantial part of the cost of such installation and operation. The penalty for violation of this regulation is closure of the trap sites concerned.

Under these new regulations, each trap operator is required to file notice with the Regional Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service prior to February 15, 1947, that he has obtained or applied for a War Department permit. This date of filing is two months earlier than in 1946.

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